

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

her to go with him to the King of France. When she humbly refused, he induced her to write to the King the eloquent letter we still possess, urging him to reform his kingdom, no longer to let his wars with England hinder the redemption of the Holy Land, but to make peace and enable the Duke to carry out his holy purpose.¹ She wrote at the same time exultantly to the Pope that at last God had sent the means to begin "the holy passage," as they had found a prince who would be a good head. But God bids him undertake another crusade as well; to raise the standard of the Cross against the corrupt and wicked ecclesiastics, and provide the Church with good pastors and rulers instead.² A little later, after her return to Avignon, hearing that Louis had narrowly escaped death through the fall of a wall at a banquet, Catherine wrote exhorting him to bear what had happened ever in his memory as a sign from God of the vanity of earthly pleasure, to keep his heart and desire fixed and nailed to the Cross, and formally to take the Cross in the presence of the Pope before the latter set out.⁸ But already the Duke's resolution and aspirations were fading away, and his subsequent career, had Catherine lived to see it, would have seemed to her the betrayal of all the hopes she had set on him.

Catherine had returned to Avignon to enter into a desperate struggle with the French cardinals for the soul of the Pope. In spite of his preparations, Gregory was wavering. "Tell him," Christ had seemed to say in her heart when he asked for a sign, ^{it} that I give him this excellent sign that it is My will that he should go : the more his going is opposed and contradicted, the more will he feel such a strength increasing in him as no man will be able to take from him ; which is contrary to his usual way."⁴ In the Sacred College, Cardinal d'Estaing, alone among his countrymen, was supporting the Pope in his preparations ; Orsini, Corsini, and Pedro de Luna were neutral; but the rest were emphatically opposed to the move, and the whole influence of the King of France was at their back.

¹ *Procgssus*, col. 1337 ; Letter 235 (i86).
238 (9).

⁸ Letter 237 (190).

⁴ Letter 238 (9).

² Letter